

Beth Sanders remarks, March 12, 2005

1. LifeBio.com applauds the Library of Congress for the excellent work done by the American Folklife Center and specifically the Veterans History Project to record and share life stories. We would encourage continued funding and expansion of the program--especially as the World War II generation holds so many stories of strength and courage. We would also like to encourage these programs to really explore ways to work with private, for profit companies to ensure MORE of our nation's history is really being told.

2. LifeBio.com encourages the funding of research to explore the health benefits of reminiscence and life review. Studies to date have indicated that depression and symptoms of Alzheimer's and asthma are reduced due to the therapeutic nature of remembering the past. Medication is one thing, but our country will be stronger if reminiscence becomes a REGULAR part of healthcare in assisted living and nursing home settings--not just a nice, extra program if someone has the time. Plus...if these memories and life experiences can be recorded, imagine the impact it will have on present and future generations 20 years or 200 years from now--if we don't know our history we are doomed to repeat it.

3. LifeBio.com believes that seniors need to be in our schools ALL THE TIME. To that end, locating senior centers in a public school building is ideal. Both groups will be greatly impacted by getting much closer to each other. With or without the senior centers in the schools, we believe that a "high school SENIOR to SENIOR citizen program" (call it SENIOR to SENIOR perhaps??) should be a graduation requirement. Interviewing a senior would meet all requirements for reading, writing, speaking, and listening in the classroom. Although it could be done at any age, seniors in high school are getting ready to embark on REAL LIFE and they REALLY could use some good perspective on what's truly important, what challenges/joys await, and some solid advice for their futures. On the flip side, the seniors will gain new perspective and learn something too through the process.

That's it! So many good ideas (from the entire group)...so little time! Thank you for this forum.

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